CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 21 February 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Carl-Magnus Hyltenius (Sweden)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 584th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Firstly, I wish to warmly welcome, on behalf of the Conference, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, His Excellency Dr. Héctor Gros-Espiell, who will be our first speaker today. The Minister is well known to the Conference, as he has held the position of Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America. He has also been active in activities relating to the United Nations, in particular in the field of human rights, and has been Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. He has also held diplomatic positions, having already been Permanent Representative at the United Nations Office at Geneva. And last but not least, he is an outstanding jurist who has an important background as a professor of public international law. I am convinced that his statement will represent a useful contribution to our work.

I have on my list of speakers for today His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay and the representatives of Brazil and New Zealand. I take pleasure now in giving the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, His Excellency Dr. Héctor Gros-Espiell.

Mr. GROS-ESPIELL (Uruguay) (translated from Spanish): Many thanks, Mr. President, for your very kind words and many thanks to the Conference on Disarmament which is receiving me today and is granting me the signal honour of addressing this meeting on behalf of the Government of my motherland. My feelings of appreciation and happiness at being amongst you today are enhanced by the fact that I am speaking in this chamber named after Francisco de Vitoria, surrounded by the magnificent frescoes painted by the great Spanish artist José María Sert, a chamber whose bronze doors are engraved with unforgettable quotations and ideas from the great Spanish jurists and theologians who in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, along with Grotius, embarked on the very difficult task of building international law based on the idea of an international community.

This is the first time that a Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay has spoken at the Conference on Disarmament. I think that the participation of a small country that is not a member of the Conference and is only an observer in the Group of 21 - small, I say, peaceful and law-abiding, whose own security is based on the very notion of collective security, with armed forces in which there is obviously no problem of an arms build-up, and which are limited to the minimum necessary in order to carry out their specific functions - is of special significance. Through it this Conference can hear the voice of a country that is devoted only to law and principles, and this I think is of very special significance, particularly at the present time in the face of current problems. It is clear that there is a very close and intimate relationship between disarmament, arms limitation and control and the concepts of peace and security. But I think that this relationship, which is beyond question and well known to everyone, should be highlighted at the present time, in the situation we are living through, because we have been given the best possible demonstration of the fact that without a process of arms limitation and control genuine peace is impossible.

(Mr. Gros-Espiell, Uruguay)

In the statement I delivered to the General Assembly of the United Nations on 4 October 1990 entitled "The vulnerability of peace without disarmament", I said one or two words that with your permission I would like to repeat again:

> "The events in the Persian Gulf remind us of the vulnerability of peace when it is not based on a system of international arms limitation and control, with the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. Dividing walls may be torn down; ideological confrontations may be mitigated; borders may be opened to communication and trade, the wings of democracy may fly over and destroy anachronistic authoritarian schemes, but no stable security or lasting peace will be attained as long as gigantic arsenals exist all over the world, ready to be used by any arbitrary and aggressive government.
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> "An armed world, one in which the great and the small furnish themselves with powerful and inhuman instruments of destruction and death, does not provide the proper framework for peace. The events of the Gulf were possible because the States involved thought they were ensuring the effectiveness of their reckless acts through the support of excessive military power, resulting from an uncontrolled arms race.
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> "The international community must avoid the occurrence of similar dangerous situations in the future. That will be possible only if we accelerate the disarmament process. Uruguay understands that the immediate task is to concentrate on further advancing the regulation and limitation of armaments, whether conventional, nuclear, chemical, bacteriological, radiological or space weapons."

In my brief statement today, it is clear that I cannot, nor should I, seek to deal with all the items, even to say a few words on each of those that are on the agenda of the Conference. I need only refer to one or two of them because of their current significance and the importance my country attaches to them, either because of their general implications or because of their regional aspects.

First of all, therefore, allow me to say a few words on the question of chemical weapons, as it stands today in the view of my Government. We know that from the legal standpoint the present situation on the chemical weapons issue is determined by the existence and applicability of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, a protocol that was supplemented many years later, because this Protocol had emerged from the work of the League of Nations, by the 1972 Convention, drafted within the United Nations and devoted to the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) and toxin weapons and their destruction. But it is clear that these two international instruments, which are manifestly important and necessarily applicable, do not by any means exhaust the international agenda on the subject of chemical weapons. For that reason the Paris Conference of 1989 on the prohibition of chemical weapons analysed the problem in the light of the present situation, and concluded that it was necessary to expedite this process in order to complete the legal framework of the total ban on all the aspects of the chemical weapons issue.

(Mr. Gros-Espiell, Uruguay)

In this context, the work of the Conference on Disarmament is obviously of great importance, and today is of a topicality and urgency that cannot be ignored by anyone. The Paris Conference, in the year 1989, on the one hand, recognized the importance and continuing validity of the 1925 Protocol, and at it the States parties to that Protocol solemnly reaffirmed the prohibition as established in it and called upon States that have not yet acceded to it to do so, but underscored, and this is what is important, what I wish to emphasize today, the necessity of concluding, at an early date a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons, and on their destruction. This is the major challenge we face as far as chemical weapons are concerned at the present time, one that in the light of the current situation it is necessary to expedite with renewed efforts and with sure hopes of arriving as soon as possible at an acceptable solution for the entire international community which will be implemented immediately without fail. In this regard, I wish to refer to the statement by the Group of 21 which was made very recently on 7 February 1991 in the form of an exposé by Peru on behalf of the Group. On this basis, on this awareness of the urgency, the importance, the topicality and this Conference's inescapable commitment to the international community with regard to the chemical weapons issue, my Government hopes that in a short time it will be possible to present this convention that is being so eagerly awaited.

The other item I wished to refer to is the item relating to the arms race in space. The mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and the statement made by Sweden on behalf of the Group of 21 on 14 February last are major steps to permit progress on this topic. Thus both with regard to chemical weapons and on the arms race in outer space, two ad hoc committees are in operation and we hope that in both cases this Conference will be in a position to set an example of swiftness, calm, thorough and practical analysis, in solving these problems.

With regard to the item on nuclear weapons, an item which obviously could not be ignored in the statement I am making in this Conference, I would like to recall the words I spoke on behalf of the Uruguayan Government on 21 August 1990 at the conference to review the non-proliferation Treaty (NPT). After analysing what the NPT means with regard to the process that would counter the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and recalling that my country is a party to the non-proliferation Treaty and has always strictly fulfilled its obligations thereunder, I added the following, which I believe must always be borne in mind:

> "Is the NPT perhaps the only possible form, the only way to combat and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons? Uruguay considers that the NPT is the most important route or avenue, but that it would be a doubtful claim to assert that it is the sole and exclusive road towards the objective of non-proliferation. Non-proliferation is not limited to the NPT. It also has its basis in the treaties under which nuclear-weapon-free zones have been established in inhabited regions of the globe. I am referring to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Treaty of Rarotonga. But although non-proliferation is the common aim of these treaties and those which may be concluded in the future to establish new nuclear-weapon-free zones and the NPT, it cannot be denied that those

(Mr. Gros-Espiell, Uruguay)

agreements do not have - that is to say, the Treaties of Tlatelolco and Rarotonga - the premonitory element that some States find in the NPT, as they draw no distinction between States parties in relation to the prohibition on supplying, producing, importing or using nuclear weapons."

Two zones free of nuclear weapons exist in the world today, fully in force and of relative applicability: the zone created by the Treaty of Tlatelolco in Latin America and the zone created by the Treaty of Rarotonga in the South Pacific. Their importance is obvious. With regard to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, my country has always been concerned, with a concern that still applies fully, to help to achieve the full and total application of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, so that it covers the entire geographical area described in article 4 of the Treaty. Consequently, in the statement I delivered at the NPT review conference and to which I have already referred, I said in that regard:

"Uruguay, which is a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, is making every effort to promote texts relating to this Treaty that will enable Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Cuba to become parties to it, and secure their adoption in due course. As is well known, Argentina has signed but not ratified, Brazil and Chile have ratified, but without the waiver provided for under article 28, paragraph 2, and Cuba has not yet signed. Uruguay, which nurtures the wish that the whole of Latin America will be free of nuclear weapons, which will not be achieved until these four States, which are not parties to the NPT, enter into the Tlatelolco system, is preparing on the basis of consultations a number of texts that will enable these four sister countries to join the regional non-proliferation régime."

Subsequently to that month of August 1990, major events took place which it is necessary to mention. The Declaration of Foz do Iguaçú drafted on 28 November 1990 by Presidents Menem and Collor of Argentina and Brazil respectively marked an extremely important step forward towards the possibility that these two sister countries will become full parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Immediately after the Declaration of Foz do Iguaçú, Uruguay contacted the Governments of Argentina and Brazil to express its satisfaction and its whole-hearted readiness to co-operate with them in order to attain the objectives set forth in that Declaration and in this connection I would also like to recall that in the weeks following that Declaration of November 1990 Chile officially expressed its wish to participate in a process that would make it possible to arrive at the moment to present the waiver in question. As for Cuba, Uruguay has been carrying out sustained diplomatic efforts, through direct contacts between the Foreign Ministries of Cuba and Uruguay, in an endeavour to co-operate to the utmost with a view to the desirable ultimate objective that Cuba too will become a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We hope that this open process, an important part of which will unfold in the coming weeks in Vienna with regard to the contacts that are being made by Argentina and Brazil in this regard, will be successful and that we will have very good news soon.

Another subject I would like to mention is the relationship which cannot be denied, and I think that present events point to this ever more clearly, the close and necessary relationship between the problems of arms limitation

(Mr. Gros-Espiell, Uruguay)

and control and international humanitarian law. In our view it is necessary to prevent disarmament negotiations from being a closed preserve, a dialogue between political specialists on disarmament without any contacts with public opinion or with the progress and development of the remainder of international law. In this connection I think that the Convention of 10 April 1981 on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects is an example. Although this Convention was drawn up in a special United Nations conference on prohibitions or restrictions of use of weapons and not within this Conference, it is an example of the relationship, the parallelism, between the problems of arms limitation and international humanitarian law. The Convention to which I have just referred is not strictly speaking a disarmament convention, but it is one lato sensu, as is indicated by its inclusion in the United Nations book on the status of multilateral arms regulation and disarmament agreements.

I also wish to say a very few words on the relationship between the processes of arms limitation and regulation in the light of disarmament and the protection of the environment, the basic issue of the present day. The relationship between these two concepts is clear, and if we do not develop an appropriate and rational process of limitation and regulation of arms build-ups, if we do not properly tackle the question of nuclear tests and nuclear explosions, then we will be contributing to the dreadful problem of the deterioration of the environment. The Convention of 10 April 1972 on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques is an example, a first step towards using treaties to handle this relationship between two issues of vital importance for the future of mankind. But this is a convention that deals with only one aspect of the problem, having been drawn up in 1972. Since then 18 years have passed, and today the problem of environmental protection has acquired a seriousness and urgency and a pressing need for solutions which goes beyond what could have been imagined at that time. This means, in my view and in the view of the Government of Uruguay, that we must tackle this problem head-on, and that the issue must be dealt with in a frank and thorough manner at the Conference on Environment and Development which is to be held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

Finally, I wish to point to the importance my country attaches to the participation of the Latin American countries as observers in the Conference on Disarmament - Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and Uruguay - and reiterate once again their full support for the views that were set forth in the document of 15 February 1991. These countries wish to co-operate in the work of the Group of 21, and I think that the importance of this participation is obvious. There is a projection and necessary understanding on the part of these observer countries that wish to attend the proceedings of the Conference on Disarmament as a means of contributing, although they are not members of the Conference, to progress and forward movement on this issue which is essential for the survival of mankind itself at this very critical time for the entire world.

My thanks once again, and I would like to reiterate not only the great personal honour for me to be able to address you, but also Uruguay's whole-hearted calling to contribute to the success of the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. RICUPERO (Brazil) (translated from Spanish): The privilege of speaking immediately after Minister Gros-Espiell enables me to emphasize the significance and inspiration of the views we have just heard, enriched not only by the moral authority of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of a country with such an impeccable tradition where peace, security and international co-operation are concerned, but also by a lifetime of study, labour and personal dedication to the cause of disarmament.

(continued in English)

Mr. President, it is an honour and a pleasure for me to be among the first to address to you our congratulations on the presidency that we are sure will greatly benefit from the same quality of competence, balance and search for compromise that have so outstandingly distinguished your recent chairmanship of the Committee on Chemical Weapons. Our words of appreciation and praise go also to Ambassador Rasaputram, whose tireless energy and thoughtful diplomatic efforts have created the necessary conditions for the programme of work for the present session of the Conference. Finally, let me add my voice to those who expressed feelings of sadness for the departure of so many remarkable colleagues in recent months, as well as my welcome greetings and best wishes to the new representatives who have joined our common endeavour.

In continuation and confirmation of a practice recently established, it gives me special satisfaction to take the floor on behalf not only of the Government of Brazil, but also of the Government of Argentina, to provide this session with information on recent developments in our nuclear co-operation. One of the approaches being developed by both countries to support the bilateral process of integration is the strengthening of confidence-building mechanisms by means of stable and broadened co-operation. This effort has led to a number of concrete achievements.

Less than three months ago Presidents Fernando Collor and Carlos Menem signed a Declaration on Common Nuclear Policy in the border town of Foz do Iguaçú. Ambassador García Moritán and I have been instructed to request that it be distributed as a document of this Conference.

Dr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and Dr. Antonio Stempel Paris, Secretary-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America, attended the Foz do Iguaçú ceremony as special guests. On that occasion, a time frame for the implementation of important objectives of our nuclear policies was established by the two Presidents, aiming at the adoption of a common nuclear material accounting and control system, to be applied to all nuclear activities in both countries; the negotiation with the International Atomic Energy Agency of a joint safeguards agreement, on the basis of the common accounting and control system; and the adoption of initiatives to facilitate at a later stage the entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the political objectives of which are fully shared by our two countries.

The decisions for short-term implementation then taken have already been substantively carried out, including the exchange of descriptive lists of nuclear facilities; the exchange of declarations on the initial inventories of nuclear materials; and the first reciprocal inspections of the centralized register systems.

(Mr. Ricupero, Brazil)

The next step, to take place shortly, is the presentation of the International Atomic Energy Agency of the register and reporting system which is part of the common accounting and control system. As the name suggests, it consists of common procedures for accounting, registering, reporting and inspection, which will guarantee each party systematic access to all the nuclear facilities of the other party and keep track of all nuclear materials in both countries. Having established the procedures for accounting, registering and reporting, experts from both countries are now developing the inspection mechanisms.

Under previous declarations Brazil and Argentina had already set up the structure within which technical and industrial co-operation would take place between the two countries. A protocol was concluded allowing for increased industrial complementarity in the construction of the Atucha II and Angra II nuclear power plants. The Permanent Committee on Common Nuclear Policy has been meeting for about two years now and will continue to meet alternately in Argentina and Brazil to assess technical co-operation and set guidelines and co-ordinate positions to be followed in international forums dedicated to nuclear energy and nuclear disarmament.

Openness and transparency are key elements of the nuclear co-operation between Brazil and Argentina. Confidence-building in the nuclear field can be more easily achieved by means of close technical and political co-operation. Thus, the common mechanisms and procedures which are being followed by our Governments are a natural outcome of broad, stable and intimate co-operation encompassing all fields. They constitute a logical corollary of that co-operation.

In the case of Argentina and Brazil the "trust and verify" principle has acquired a more wholesome and gratifying expression. Our experience in the field of nuclear co-operation has taught us that "trust and verify" should not be systematically inverted to "verify and trust". Undoubtedly, inspections are crucial and indispensable, but in the absence of the desirable political conditions they may not be enough to reduce or eliminate mistrust and suspicion.

The joint safeguards agreement to be concluded by Brazil and Argentina with the International Atomic Energy Agency will be based on the common accounting and control system and will provide all the information needed to secure the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in both countries, while respecting Argentina's and Brazil's right to develop nuclear technology without undue restrictions, and protecting the confidential information of a technological and industrial nature acquired in the process. The agreement will also have to be compatible with the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

The third step approved in the Declaration of Foz do Iguaçú relates to the updating and improvement of the text of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, particularly those articles detailing verification and compliance procedures. The adjustments concern the need to harmonize the provisions aimed at defining the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the need to preserve confidential information of a technological and industrial nature.

(Mr. Ricupero, Brazil)

The Governments of Argentina and Brazil believe that the Treaty of Tlatelolco thus updated needs to be accorded due recognition, and that it should come into force as soon as possible for all Latin American countries and for all the States referred to in Protocols I and II. We continue to consider the Treaty of Tlatelolco the appropriate instrument to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in Latin America, a goal which it has in fact achieved since its conclusion in 1967.

We hope our nuclear co-operation will encourage others to intensify their negotiations aimed at substantially reducing their existing nuclear arsenals, thus opening the way for further negotiations with the constructive participation of all nuclear-weapon States.

In concluding my remarks, I wish to state that the Governments of Brazil and Argentina share the perception that they have already achieved an important objective: the consolidation of a constructive approach towards nuclear security through nuclear co-operation. An approach which tends to be at the same time more amenable and more effective. Nevertheless, we expect more of our initiative. We hope this positive approach can serve as an example for the encouragement and reinforcement of regional and global security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Brazil for his statement and for the very kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Hannah.

Mr. HANNAH (New Zealand): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the Conference on Disarmament presidency for the next four weeks. Sweden and New Zealand have many shared views on disarmament and international security issues. You can be assured of our support during your presidency. We, for our part, are confident that the momentum of the Conference will be strengthened by your personal contribution in the position.

I should also like to pay my respects to my neighbour on the non-members' bench today, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay, His Excellency Dr. Héctor Gros-Espiell. I followed his thought-provoking statement with great interest. So, too, the statement of the distinguished Ambassador of Brazil, speaking on behalf of his own country and Argentina.

My statement this morning is devoted entirely to the subject of chemical weapons. Specifically, I wish to place before the CD the report of New Zealand's national trial inspection, contained in document CD/1057. Before doing so, however, I would like to make a few general comments on the negotiations on a chemical weapons convention - at this moment the prime focus of the work of this Conference.

New Zealand does not have, and has never had chemical weapons. We do not allow chemical weapons to be stationed on our territory. We are party to the 1925 Geneva Protocol, and in 1989 we withdrew our reservation to that Protocol which permitted the use of chemical weapons under certain circumstances. We took that step because the New Zealand Government does not now see any circumstances where the use of chemical weapons would be tolerable.

(Mr. Hannah, New Zealand)

The possibility that chemical weapons might be used in the Gulf war is of immediate concern. That threat confirms our belief in the need for a convention going far beyond the Geneva Protocol, one which effectively prohibits the development, production, stockpiling as well as the use of chemical weapons. That threat should strengthen the resolve of all of us to conclude such a convention as soon as possible.

It is against such a background that New Zealand's support for a chemical weapons convention should be seen. New Zealand is not a key participant in the negotiations. We have only a fledgling chemical industry and are unable to muster the technical expertise shared by so many here in this room. But we are following the negotiations closely. Our aim is that, once the chemical weapons convention is concluded, New Zeland will have the necessary legislation in place to become an original party. Others have already expressed a similar aim, and we hope many more will do likewise as the negotiations enter their concluding phase.

New Zealand is under no illusions that there still remain crucial political obstacles to be overcome before a chemical weapons convention becomes a reality. We accept that some of those may be beyond the scope of this body. That is why we support the idea of a ministerial conference, later this year, where the necessary political decisions might be taken. It goes without saying that such a conference should be open to all - CD members and non-members alike - who share our common interest in a chemical weapons convention. It is only through universal adherence that the chemical weapons convention will achieve its objective of ensuring that such weapons will never again be used anywhere on this Earth.

My Government's support for the conclusion of a comprehensive, effective, and verifiable chemical weapons convention is shared by the New Zealand chemical industry. As a measure of this support, Government and industry worked together to undertake a national trial inspection in November 1990.

As I have noted, New Zealand has only a small chemical industry, and limited technical resources at its disposal. We are not alone in that. Through discussion at regional meetings we are aware of the burden other small countries believe they will face in implementing the chemical weapons convention. One objective of our trial inspection was therefore to determine how the lessons learned from earlier inspections were applicable to those with more modest chemical industries. Bearing in mind our limited technical resources, a second objective was to examine the auditing aspect of an inspection, both as an indepedent measure of verification, and in its relationship to scientific monitoring.

The inspection we undertook was conducted at a multi-purpose complex of an agricultural chemical company that produces mainly herbicides. It is the largest of only a few chemical manufacturers in New Zealand. It does not produce any chemicals currently listed under schedule 2 of the "rolling text". For the purposes of the inspection, therefore, para-chloro-ortho-cresol (PCOC) was treated as a schedule 2 chemical. The declared activity at the plant during the inspection was the production of the herbicide sodium 4-chloro-2-methyl phenoxybutyrate (MCPB).

(Mr. Hannah, New Zealand)

The report of the trial inspection is contained in CD/1057. I will restrict my comments today to the two specific objectives mentioned earlier. The inspection demonstrated that commercial practices in today's chemical industry give rise to a myriad of overlapping records that can be audited as a means of verifying legitimate chemical production. The trial inspection clearly showed the effectiveness as a verification tool of a detailed financial and production records audit.

An audit of financial records was undertaken in addition to a production records audit to verify declared activities over an extended period of time (which a site inspection may not be certain to identify). The financial records audit also provided a thorough cross-check of production records in the event of a fraudulent dual accounting system (which we thought would most likely occur in the production domain). The independence of both recording systems provides extensive opportunity for the detection of undeclared activity, and should not be underplayed.

Although relatively straightforward, the records and production audit proved to be the most time-consuming aspect of the trial inspection. In undertaking the audit, a five-point strategy was adopted: (i) preliminary evaluation; (ii) production analysis and evaluation; (iii) financial substantive testing evaluation; (iv) internal control (compliance testing) evaluation; and (v) analytical review evaluation. This strategy, together with a list of documentation required for a production and financial records audit, is detailed in the annex to the report.

It was found that to undertake a records audit an inspector needed experience in both commercial auditing and management/cost accounting from a manufacturing background. A minimum of six to nine working days (depending on the complexities of the operation and number of independent processes) was necessary to complete an audit.

Looking more generally at the resource implications, the trial inspection reinforced for us the lesson that even for a modest chemical industrial facility subject to routine inspection procedures, a high degree of technical instrumentation and a wide variety of skills are needed to properly verify legitimate chemical industry activity. Physical inspection, financial and production records audit, and sample analysis are all essential ingredients of an effective inspection régime.

In undertaking such an exercise New Zealand used the full extent of its technical and scientific capability. It is our view that the resources required to attain such a capability are beyond the scope of many countries and that, accordingly, such countries are likely to face difficulties in meeting chemical weapons convention obligations. Granted the burden of routine and challenge inspections will fall not upon individual Governments, but upon the technical secretariat. But even so, the requirement to establish national authorities with the kind of capabilities I have just listed will not be easy for many.

In its conclusion, the New Zealand report identifies two possible ways to help overcome such difficulties. Firstly, countries need to review the technical/legal/scientific resources their regions possess, and the potential for regional co-operation in implementing the convention. Secondly,

(Mr. Hannah, New Zealand)

development at an early stage of a flexible but standardized methodology of key audit and inspection approaches would be desirable. This would ensure compatibility of inspection treatments, streamlined and effective techniques, and prior determination and preparation of the human resources and equipment required.

Since our inspection report was prepared, we have had the opportunity to study your own delegation's paper, CD/1053, which proposes ways of streamlining schedule 2 inspections. When you introduced that paper at last week's meeting, you expressed some doubts about the cost-effectiveness of schedule 2 verification in the draft convention. We share those concerns and, on the basis of our own experience, are particularly aware of the potential for a verification régime to overburden the national authorities of smaller would-be States parties. We look forward to the proposals in CD/1053 being closely examined by the Ad Hoc Committee.

Unless individual States are confident of their own ability to implement relevant aspects of the chemical weapons convention, there cannot be the necessary international confidence in the convention as a whole. The New Zealand experience is that, for many countries, there will be practical constraints quite different in nature from those facing the major players in the negotiations. We all need to keep these constraints in mind as we begin what all hope will be the year in which a chemical weapons convention is concluded.

I thank the members of the Conference and yourself, Mr. President, for hearing out a rather technical intervention, and I hope it is of assistance to the deliberations on the chemical weapons convention.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of New Zealand for his statement and for the kind words he addressed to the Chair. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other representative wish to take the floor at this stage? I see none.

May I now turn to another subject? You will recall that, at our plenary meeting yesterday, I informed you of my intention to identify a Special Co-ordinator who would be charged with seeking consensus on an appropriate organizational arrangement for agenda item 8, entitled "Comprehensive programme of disarmament". I am pleased to report to you that my consultations have now been concluded and that I am appointing Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico as Special Co-ordinator for this agenda item. I am grateful to Ambassador Marín Bosch for having accepted this responsibility, and I am sure that he will discharge it with his usual diplomatic competence.

As indicated in our timetable of meetings, immediately after this plenary meeting the Conference will hold an informal meeting on the substance of agenda item 2, entitled "Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament".

I have no further business today and I shall now proceed to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 28 February at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.05 a.m.